

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)	
	:	Examiner: P. Butler
TAKASHI TOMIYAMA ET AL.)	
	:	Group Art Unit: 1742
Application No.: 10/787,303)	
	:	Confirmation No. 4362
Filed: February 27, 2004)	
	:	
For: PROCESS FOR PRODUCING)	
A CLEANING BLADE	:	May 3, 2011

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

STATEMENT OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW

Sir:

This Statement is filed to summarize a telephonic interview conducted between the Examiner and Applicants' representative on April 20, 2011. During the interview, Applicants' undersigned attorney and the Examiner discussed the amended claims and the art cited in the December 7, 2010 Office Action.

Specifically, Applicants' attorney reiterated that U.S. Patent No. 4,825,249 (Oki) is not understood either to explicitly or inherently disclose impregnation of an isocyanate compound into the urethane blade. Oki, for example, specifically states that it is the groups that are on the surface that react (col. 2, lines 31-41), rather than the groups inside the urethane rubber. Also, application by dipping does not necessarily lead to impregnation. Thus, even though Oki mentions that a solution for forming a coating may be applied by dipping and the isocyanate compound in accordance with the present

invention may be applied by immersing the blade in an isocyanate compound bath, impregnation does not necessarily occur in Oki. For instance, in accordance with the present invention, the isocyanate compound applied to the urethane blade for impregnation is at a temperature at which it is in a liquid state. In Oki, the coating material is applied in a form of a solution or a dispersion, i.e., a compound that may contain an isocyanate group is dissolved or dispersed in an organic solvent, and there is no teaching that the compound is at a temperature at which it is in a liquid state (col. 3, lines 28-37).

Also, Oki does not disclose or suggest a method in which the cured layer is formed in a direction below a surface of the blade that was contacted with the isocyanate compound, as recited in claim 11. That is, a portion of the urethane blade is converted into the cured layer. In Oki, a coating is formed on the surface of the urethane resin that came into contact with a coating solution or dispersion. Since the claims in the present application are related to a method, this is a substantial distinction in how the method is carried out.

Furthermore, Oki does not disclose or suggest a method in which the isocyanate remaining on the urethane blade surface after the impregnation step is removed first by blowing warm or hot air and then using a solvent. The Examiner alleged that there is suggestion in the art to remove the extra coating solution from the surface of the urethane rubber in Oki based on the disclosure in U.S. Patent No. 3,387,071 (Cahill) to control the thickness of the coating.

However, even if so, there is no disclosure or suggestion to conduct a second removal step in Oki using a solvent as claimed, and no reference has been cited for such a teaching in the December 7, 2010 Office Action. In fact, removing a coating solution from the surface of the urethane resin in Oki before formation of the coating is to take place would render Oki unsatisfactory for its intended purpose since the very material needed for reaction on the urethane resin surface will be removed before a coating is formed, i.e., modifying Oki to include the removal steps as presently claimed would prevent formation of the coating that Oki wishes to form. Thus, clearly, there is no suggestion or motivation to modify the process in Oki to include the two removal steps as claimed. M.P.E.P. 2143.01(V).

The Examiner referred to the disclosure in JP 2001-343874 (Miura) regarding impregnation. This reference, however, does not disclose the removal steps as claimed and that these steps are important in achieving the desired cleaning blade performance. The Examiner's attention is directed to the comparative data in the specification, which shows that when the removal steps were not performed, inferior toner cleaning was observed (Tables 1 and 2).

Accordingly, Applicants again respectfully submit that whether considered separately or in any combination, the documents of record fail to disclose or suggest the presently claimed elements.

Wherefore, withdrawal of the outstanding rejection and passage of the application to issue are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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